



United States Department of the Interior

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
EROS Data Center
Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57198

IN REPLY REFER TO: OAB 7-15
OC 7-5

July 13, 2001

Dr. Ghassem R. Asrar
Associate Administrator for Earth Science
National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Code YDO
300 East Street SW
Washington, DC 20546-0001

RE: Support letter for the Kentucky grant proposal in response to
NASA BAA-01-0ES-01

Dear Dr. Asrar:

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Land Cover Characterization Program has begun a national land cover mapping program, using Landsat 7 source data, that follows the National Land Cover Dataset (1992) as the second in a series of land cover census products. This work is underway at the USGS EROS Data Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota and will continue over the next four years. The Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics (MRLC) 2000 Land Cover Mapping Program is one of the primary activities of the MRLC Consortium, an alliance of federal agencies that use satellite data to accomplish their mission programs.

The MRLC 2000 land cover mapping procedures were deliberately designed to be accomplished by USGS staff, by private sector contractors, and through cooperative agreements like the one we propose with Kentucky. Under the cooperative agreement described in the NASA Broad Agency Announcement proposal "Enhancing Monitoring and Assessment of Forest Resources of the Commonwealth of Kentucky", USGS will provide Landsat 7 data with terrain and radiometric corrections to MRLC specifications, special derivatives, supporting spatial data, and training for staff at the EROS Data Center. Kentucky staff will use these elements to map land cover classes for the MRLC 2000 Land Cover Data Base and for further refinement with high-resolution data sources to meet Kentucky forest resource requirements. All of the input data and the derived land cover classes will be assembled as a database that can be used to produce additional derivative maps and datasets.

At this time, no USGS direct funding can be committed, but funds for land cover mapping by Kentucky in support of MRLC land cover mapping may be available in future years.

Dr. Asrar

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This collaboration will accelerate the accomplishment of the goals of both organizations and will serve as a model for state and federal cooperation. The result will be a database that encompasses the requirements for national consistency of the MRLC 2000 Land Cover Database and local relevancy as required for the Kentucky applications. We look forward to working closely as partners with the Commonwealth of Kentucky in producing a suite of land cover data that will serve both state and national interests.

Our contact for this activity is Nick Van Driel, Land Cover Characterization Program Manager, who can be reached at 605-594-6007 (vanndriel@usgs.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Eckes', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Martin E. Eckes
Acting Chief, EROS Data Center

Copy to: N. Van Driel